

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 084002
ORIGIN EA-12

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R 010251Z APR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY DAKAR
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MANILA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 084002

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, RP

SUBJECT:PHILIPPINE MUSLIM PROBLEM

REF: STATE 63910 (NOTAL)

1. PETER SCHAEFER HAS INFORMED DEPARTMENT HE INTENDS TO VISIT DAKAR TO ATTEND ISLAMIC CONFERENCE APRIL 24-28. SCHAEFER IS U.S. CITIZEN EMPLOYEE OF DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES, INCORPORATED, WHICH IN THE RECENT PAST HAS ENGAGED IN DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS IN MINDANAO ON BEHALF OF PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT.

2. DURING COURSE OF THIS WORK, SCHAEFER DEVELOPED CONTACTS WITH VARIOUS PHILIPPINE MUSLIM LEADERS, INCLUDING HASHIM SALAMAT, RASHID LUCMAN, AND SALIPADA PENDATUN, CONFIDENTIAL

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WHO HAVE RECENTLY FORMED THE COORDINATING AND ADVISORY COUNCIL (CAC) OF THE BANGSA MORO MOVEMENT. THIS GROUP HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN STRUGGLE WITH NUR MISUARI FOR CONTROL OF MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF), THE PRINCIPAL MUSLIM ORGANIZATION IN INSURRECTION AGAINST THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT. MISUARI HAS BEEN SUPPORTED BY LIBYAN GOVERNMENT; CAC LEADERS HAVE SPENT MUCH TIME RECENTLY IN JIDDA.

3. DURING PAST FOUR MONTHS, SCHAEFER HAS VIGOROUSLY SOUGHT USG SUPPORT FOR CAC, ARGUING THAT IN CONTRAST TO NUR MISUARI, WHOM THEY LABEL AS A COMMUNIST, CAC LEADERS ARE MODERATES WHO ARE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE PEACE WITH GOP. SCHAEFER HAS SOUGHT PUBLIC STATEMENT BY USG RECOGNIZING CAC AS LEGITIMATE LEADERSHIP OF PHILIPPINE MUSLIMS. HE HAS ALSO URGED THAT USG ACT AS INTERMEDIARY IN ARRANGING NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN CAC AND GOP.

4. DEPARTMENT HAS INFORMED SCHAEFER: THAT WE CONSIDER MUSLIM INSURRECTION IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES TO BE BASICALLY AN INTERNAL MATTER OF PRIMARY CONCERN TO GOP; THAT USG COULD NOT APPROPRIATELY INDICATE SUPPORT, EITHER PRIVATELY OR PUBLICLY, FOR ANY SPECIFIC MUSLIM GROUP, SO LONG AS THAT GROUP REMAINED IN INSURRECTION AGAINST GOP; THAT IF ASKED BY THE GOP THE USG IS PREPARED TO RENDER ASSISTANCE IN BRINGING ABOUT PEACE AND IN SEEKING SOLUTIONS TO THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES, BUT THAT IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR USG TO TAKE INITIATIVE IN SUCH MATTERS. WE HAVE INFORMED THE GOP OF SCHAEFER'S INTEREST AND OF THE POSITION WE HAVE TAKEN. THE GOP SEEMS TO BE TALKING WITH SALAMAT BUT IT IS UNCLEAR WHERE THIS WILL LEAD. THE GOP HAS NOT REQUESTED THE USG TO TAKE ANY ACTION ON THIS ISSUE.

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5. SCHAEFER HAS STATED HE WILL ATTEND CONFERENCE IN PRIVATE CAPACITY, HAVING TURNED DOWN CAC REQUEST TO ATTEND UNDER THEIR SPONSORSHIP. GIVEN HIS APPARENTLY CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM, HOWEVER, HE WILL PROBABLY FIND IT DIFFICULT TO AVOID ACTING ON THEIR BEHALF. HE MAY ALSO IMPLY A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DEPARTMENT AND DEGREE OF SUPPORT WHICH DOES NOT EXIST. IF HE APPROACHES EMBASSY WITH REQUEST FOR SUPPORT OF CAC, EMBASSY SHOULD REITERATE USG POLICY AS SET FORTH IN PARA 4 ABOVE AND NOTIFY DEPARTMENT.

COOPER

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